

Preface

Standing at the altar before God – and reciting time honored vows taken by a Man and Woman - is an awe inspiring experience.

“For Better or For Worse; For Richer or For Poorer” is a commitment; richer or for poorer does not denote just the financial portion of ones life – but to rejoice during times of spiritual richness and providing support during a time of the spiritual desert.

Together we stood before the world ready to commit our beings and in so doing to explore the wonders of life – to revel; to rejoice; to be sad; to be happy; to be cross but to find the value in forgiveness.

The dynamic mix of emotions that are part of a commitment and the blessing bestowed the institution of marriage.

What a joyous day it was on February 12, 1983.

The questionnaire seeks, rightfully, to find what happened. In so doing, the questions are geared to finding the cracks that divided as opposed to the cement that bonded us.

From the outset, in ones dismay – it is easy to forget the happy moments.

And there were happy moments.

But the descent to the valley may be recognized by one party while the other party looks continuously up knowing that we even if we are descending, the descent would not be forever.

Never.

And therein may lay the dynamic differences that a marriage joined in the sight of God, came to nothing.

Perhaps in this difference came the parting. I don't know.

But certainly I want to emphasize that even in my disheartenment; the quality of forgiveness must be always in the front of ones mind. And how easy it is to push that aside when a life is thrown into disarray.

The group Jigsaw said it best in their 1976 hit song “Sky High”:

Blown Round By The Wind
Thrown Down In a Spin

I Gave You Love
I Thought That We Had Made It To The Top
I Gave You All I Had To Give
Why Did It Have To Stop

You've Blown It All Sky High
By Telling Me a Lie
Without a Reason Why
You've Blown It All Sky High

You, You've Blown It All Sky High
Our Love Had Wings To Fly
We Could Have Touched The Sky
You've Blown It All Sky High

Up Round I've Flown
Then Down Down Like a Stone

I Gave You Love
I Gave You Love
I Thought That We Had Made It To The Top
I Gave You All I Had To Give
Why Did It Have To Stop

So down in a spin – we look to Heaven for the salvation and hope that only God and Jesus Christ can give.

I § II. Family Background

Family of the 50's 60's 70' – a dynamic time – economic opportunity and hope.

Focus on the financial – but the spiritual suddenly lost – a new generation not grasping the wonders of the faith; going through the motions; but the pressures television, radio, transportation, and the evolution of new cultural values hitting many families hard; and our family was no exception. Traditional family of happy times together – father in the family business mother volunteering a life seemingly happy – and it was. But for each child there is a sensitivity to ones surroundings and call it curse or an attribute the vision of history and its impact on the psyche of one man.

Parents have their idiosyncrasies – and my only wish is they would have engaged me in spiritual talks – but their tradition was not of that

They are good people; you have to empathize with their upbringing to know who they are; and their life was so different than mine.

They did their duty with a smile on their face to friends and family; out of commitment;

And the evolution of what is right; just, and courteous in the eyes of God.

For me – it was a love of country and an initial fright of God but the evolution in understanding his love.

To talk of subjects of great depth intrigued me greatly but never finding those souls who would join me in that discussion. I needed life that was larger than life – to commit my soul.

Who wanted to join me that journey? No one. It was by all accounts a very lonely existence.

Out of love for my country immersing myself in the knowledge of this nation;
And involving myself in its political machinery – at least in the periphery. Trips overseas; trips to the nation's capital; learning more and more and more. To the point of my having absorbed placing out of all college classes and graduating with a college degree upon my completion of volunteer military service.

For my brother – a different story that ended in great happiness; wandering and finding and wandering once again. With his third marriage the Vietnam War was over and with it found a commitment to family and community.

As to my former spouse- a family of seven children – a mother and father committed to the church – a father who loved the community of the church – a mother given more to trying to expand the boundaries of the church. And as for the children; one of the seven has embraced its foundation; needing a community perhaps more than the love; but we draw upon the church in many different ways.

My spouse's parents embraced life – and their emotions were high powered; fortunately, the father was the stable force in the family – through his humor and personality glossing over the trying times.

And how that impacted the children not being a psychologically one can only guess – some children and others retreated. (my wife)

I tired of their gossip about the church and its failings. I'm a Scotsman an optimist and want to press on; not be a bearing of the cup of despair.

I retreated from their family later on as talk turned to gossip and the playing of the conversation game of "Can you top this?"

I was weary and one point my wife thoughtfully saying I had married her - not her family – but I sense my absence caused her consternation;

Spouse much – she loved the company of men – their attention

III. Before you and your former spouse met each other, how much dating was done by each of you.

Me? - Me – allow myself a moment laughter – I'm told I'm an intimidating person; not by choice but by actions and mannerisms – not much.

My former spouse – she was very popular with the men.

IV. When and did you become acquainted with your former spouse

Through a blind date.

V. Did you and your former spouse live together prior to marriage?

Yes – my spouse was sharing an apartment with another woman at the time and had become quite annoyed at the habits of her roommate – and literally begged to move in with me.
So it is then our relationship heated up.

VI. Describe your courtship

Courtship – a fondness for the railroads; hiking; joining with her in her job with the elderly and helping them. Our time was spent together – in retrospect I should have caught the sincerity of her dislike for my political life following a parade in Barberton OH where she expressed her dislike of having to deal with all the people.

Having lived through the tumult of life – my tendency is to gloss over differences until like the asthmatic they reached a boiling point I and I would consciously go over my list of grievances – to which there would be silence.

As to my decision about restraint – I deferred – I was a “Neville Chamberlain” appeasement personality in courtship and in marriage; besides weren’t there more important issues?

VII. When and why did you and your former spouse decide to marry?

September 1982 I proposed outside the O’Neil’s department Store at the Summit Mall - Ohio; funny I should remember the occasion as CBS News anchor Douglas Edwards had completed his 5:00 PM evening broadcast on it was then I presented Judith with an engagement ring.

Engagement lasted from September to our day of marriage in February 12, 1983; the date of Abraham Lincoln’s Birthday.

The decision to get married was mutually agreed to – I was genuinely happy for the vivaciousness of my ex-wife; she mirrored her father in many ways – a warm and what I thought was an easy going temperament and personality – balanced my more serious and formal demeanor.

There was no doubt as to the notion of commitment and the responsibility; and I would note, with a certain fondness – my ex-spouse’s father’s good advice when he asked us to chat privately before we left for our honeymoon. He commented about the notion of marriage being **giving more** than receiving – and in the end it all works out.

Having just been through back surgery – his words were laced with pain – but he genuinely seemed happy on this occasion!

VIII. Did either of you have any doubts or reservations about your decision to marry? Did anyone advise against the marriage?

No doubts on our part. However, her mother’s comments to my ex-spouse’s marrying “above her station”; did she understand the risks? What was that all about?

IX. Was the relationship ever broken prior to the wedding day?

No.

X. Did you and your former spouse make any type of pre-nuptial agreement?

No.

XI. Describe any religious instructions you and your former spouse received?

Yes- we attended the prenuptial program offered by the church at St Augustine in November 1982. I felt very very uncomfortable, as I was a Protestant, I was never really welcomed and understood. My spouse empathized with me and felt at our respective ages we were treated like children. At the end of the weekend session to ease our frustration we had a few drinks at a local bar.

XII. During your engagement, how much time was spent on wedding and honeymoon preparations?

We were in agreement with all aspects of the wedding planning; having been through so much in my life I was very amenable to whatever plans she wanted; but especially I remember the music; and how we were in agreement with the selection of music for the wedding – we received many compliments for our musical selections.

We both loved the railroads and our honeymoon was to being by taking the AMTRAK Lakeshore Limited to New York City.

XIII. Describe the quality of communication prior to the marriage.

In retrospect communication was quite good; but she was lost – looking for stability and direction – for as talented as she was (is) there's a need for a strong foundation to complement those who are creative (her).

I guess a strong foundation eventually gets boring.

XIV. Prior to the marriage, did you and your former spouse have any discussion or agreements regarding children?

There was no doubt as to our wanting a family; but being young, we first wanted to travel; to broaden our perspective on the world.

XV. Describe your problem solving skills prior to marriage;

Problem solving skills – calmly discussing my concerns – but no response – no vigorousness in responding to my concerns I liked a spirited discussion – a good debate to resolve the issues – and she would never say anything. Her mind wasn't working. Weren't my concerns worthy of discussion? I guess not.

Why did she keep the love letters written to her by her former boyfriend?
Why? That hurt me tremendously – a silence kept for many years.

Yes. She suggested separate beds after a trip overseas – evidently my sexual performance was less than satisfactory. She even suggested I see a priest.

But in the Neville Chamberlain frame of mind – (and bless him for there are moments where appeasement is appropriate!) I carried on.

XVI. Did either of your personalities change after the marriage?

The trials and tribulations of having two sons who were asthmatic;
The ups and downs to my career; surgeries; buying a house followed by a house fire; pregnancy discrimination hearings – these among many things weighed heavily.

But –

There had to be certain stabilizing factors – the factors being the ability in parenting and shielding the children from the adversity a parent may face.

There had to be standard of behavior based upon a loving notion of looking to the future – which more than not annoyed my ex-spouse – yes there would be arguing among the children – and I was strict which resulted in confrontation with the children. But – one can't go "casual" in the face of the challenge.

My goal has been and will be in finding alternatives in solving problems – that "rubs" people the wrong way – when the easy solution may often be to throw your hands up and say "I give up!"

I loved dinner conversation – to speak of the day's activities; music; politics; leadership and the one famous question – If Jesus knocked at the door would be ready to go and follow Him? These dinner conversations which sometimes resulted in disagreements which to my way of thinking sparked the light inquiry.

Now I am lost without that thrust and parry of conversation. It hurts greatly.

XVII. Were you both faithful to each other during the courtship and engagement?

Yes out of love for each other!

XVIII If Civil Ceremony...

XIX. Describe anything unusual that occurred on the wedding day

The snow had melted – the sun appeared; and let us begin!
Yes - consummated – lovingly on the train to New York City.

XX. Was there anything of importance that you learned about your former spouse after you were married

Her mothers comments to her daughter – words essentially she was marrying above your “station” did she understand the risks – the flip side being her having coming out of a relationship with a man of the Jewish faith? (her parents would not let her marry the man); and her keeping letters from her former boyfriends


XXI. Employment History

David McCann

Summit County Auditor (1981-1988)
Departed to Become Director of Communications
Navajo Indian Nation - Window Rock Arizona
-- Resigned – improprieties Navajo Nation leader
MACCOM – Public Relations Company (1989)
Akron Beacon Journal 1990-1992
(Resigned to become stay-at-home father
for Mary Margaret age 5 and new born son Garrett)

Summit County Welfare Department 1994-1999
(Child Care Service Manager)

Become Business Manager Purchasing Department
Summit County Department of Purchasing 1999-2006
(Fired by political appointees)


Sumner Home for the Aged (1981-1992)
To Become Deputy Director (1992-1994)
-- Wyant Woods – A Horizon Corporation
Fired for being pregnant (1994)
Part-time Jobs
Stone Financial Services
Kraus Nursery

XXII. Chronology of relocations

February 1983 – July, 1984 – 514 Fouse Avenue Akron, Ohio
July, 1984 – July, 1988 - 1600 Sunset View West, Akron, Ohio
August, 1988 – Gallup, New Mexico
August, 1988 - June, 1994 – 1600 Sunset View West, Akron, Ohio
June, 1994 – January, 1999 – 522 South Hawkins Avenue, Akron, Ohio
January, 1999 – present – 1354 West Market Street, Akron, Ohio

XXIII. Describe your religious practices with your spouse (and children)

Why couldn't I inspire my family to join me in an enthusiastic attendance at church?
Why?

Religious differences – I became a Catholic in 1986 but she began separating herself from the faith; and I don't know why

XXIV. Describe any difficulties encountered during the marriage

July, 1998; after her surgery where one of ovaries was removed she said she didn't want to have relations with me again unless I had a vasectomy.

So – from that point forward we were never intimate again.

Difficulties resolved – no –

Channeling my energies into family and the garden with great vigor. – yes -

There is a melody for leadership – moments of fortissimo; moments of pianissimo; knowing when to step forward; knowing when to defer to others.

I greatly disliked getting cross – it used up so much energy; but differing philosophies often give rise to disagreements – then to a peaceful resolution.

My temperament was to back off – but things meaningful to me often were ignored; being on time; gentle words; the quality of empathy.

But we grow in relationships; and while no saint I worked at this marriage, I really did.

The journey of life for some includes moments of adversity; to climb the mountain whose summit is clouded by fog – and not knowing where the end will be.

And yet – day by day –

In efforts of growing; the physical being was strong – but illness can sap away the strength.

I'll admit to being pulled in a multitude of directions – by family - hers and mine – and finding a middle ground, well, the adage is you get hit from both sides.

In 1998 there was urgency to our buying a house. Not by me, so much – but her family.

I remember the incident so well – my wife had been hospitalized for a severe infection and underwent surgery for four hours; sitting in the hospital lounge her parents kindly started talking about their very generous contribution for a home. Frankly, that was the furthest thing from my mind; but I suspect they recognized the adversity we had been through and wanted to provide us with a sense of stability.

The process of buying a home was tenuous – with my job as a social worker at the county's welfare department – not bringing in the great "bucks" but a very satisfying job!
Nevertheless – I went through it all with the bank – gads what an ordeal on a shoe string budget.

The house was bought – but

My wife never recovered from her surgery in her relationship with me.

The litany of adversity – while in no way dismissing the happy moments – and yes there were many (And I would emphasize here- can there be nothing more joyous than sitting quietly with a spouse on a Sunday evening reading and she sewing – I was happy with that – even during the most tumultuous times)

1985 – The beginning of my participation in the RCIA program

*To the Catholic Church
March 30
Vigil Mass
March 29*

1984 – A desire for my wife to continue her advanced degree in gerontology out of state

1986 – Premature birth of our daughter requiring her feeding every three hours 24/7 for a period of two months

1988 – My ill-fated move to serve as communications director for the Navajo Indian Nation all furniture loaded for Gallup New Mexico when I call and ask the moving van to turn around and return to Ohio –

1989 – Beginning my own business

Christmas 1989 – Accused of having become brainwashed into become a Catholic Christian

1990 – Beginning a minimum wage job and declaring bankruptcy; copyright software for voting system

1991 - Wife completes studies for certification as nursing home administrator
as a means of easing her out of job
Son is born in November

March 1992 – Wife becomes assistant administrator at local nursing home and I become a househusband caring for the two children

December 993 – In an alleged corporate restructuring move – my pregnant wife is relieved of her duties; fillies for pregnancy discrimination with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission – the Commission finds probable cause for pregnancy discrimination

March, 1994 – I secure employment as a social worker – child care service manager for the Summit County Welfare Department

May, 1994 – Ex spouse's father has heart surgery- beginning a slow descent to ill health

June, 1994 – Third child is born; move to larger apartment

December, 1994 – second child hospitalized for severe asthma; starting a course treatment lasting for the next 10 years

January, 1995 – Third child hospitalized for severe infection

RSV
respiratory syncytial virus

April, 1996 – Third child hospitalized for asthma – begins treatment that lasts to this day

June, 1998 – Wife hospitalized for infection – focus on buying a home

September, 1998 – A fixer up is bought – house fire occurs – cancellation of insurance
Delay in moving

January, 1999 – Move into home

July, 1999 – Begin new position with the Summit County as business manager for the county's purchasing department

August, 2005 – I am in an automobile accident

June, 2006 – Relieved of duties with the county

July, 2006 – Spouse asks to "get out of it" (the marriage)

XXV. Did you and/or your partner experience any difficulties in emotional health and/or physical health?

We were both in good health – and other than a post partum depression following the birth of our second child; and my taking medication for my restless leg syndrome;

But following her surgery in 1998 – something changed.

XXVI Were you faithful to each other during the marriage?

Faithful yes.

Toward the end – and interestingly – I had found a string bass music teacher for my son – it was then my wife began taking long walks in the park on Sunday morning.

In a humorous vein – and I hope whoever may read this is not taken to the depths of despair; I will not be; but all of these circumstances are, shall I write, a bit bizarre?

XXVII. Parental Responsibilities during the marriage.

To every household there is the strict taskmaster and the parent the children will run to when the strict taskmaster outlines a position.

Relaxation and fun have their places in the equation of running a household – those items are of great value! But...

There is a time and place – and the balance is to be maintained.

So – I will let it be said – my Saturday and Sunday afternoon naps were in recognition (and my way of recharging the batteries) of the order I sought to maintain; the development of manners; the focus on studies (and the resulting arguments); evening dinners with my family; and fostering conversation.

I was a cheerful morning person; excited about the new day – regardless of what the previous day had brought; and weekends were no exception!

But .. this is the notion of cognitive dissonance – if both parents do not show a mirroring, even quietly acquiescing to the other's passions – then the young people become confused and will use the division to create, shall I say, dissension.

XXVIII. At any time did you discuss personal or marital problems with professional persons?

No

XXIX. Please give details of any and all separations including the final separation.

She wanted out. And nothing would change her mind. At a minimum I asked for a well thought out letter to explain; in return I received a scribbling from a soul who wanted out. So be it.

XXX. When were statements first made about a possible divorce?

Initiating divorce – my wife – July 3, 2006 “I want out” at Akron’s Amber Pub restaurant; Bastille Day July 14, 2006 meeting with her attorney; August 5, 2006 The day of dropping the bomb on Hiroshima – Signing divorce papers; September 11, 2006 filing of divorce papers with the Summit Court Common Pleas Court – Domestic Division; United Nations Day October 24, 2006 appearing in divorce court; November 27, 2006 (premier Wagner’s - *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* – from Nietzsche’s book) Alfred Nobel establishes peace prize

23 year marriage ends.

XXXI. Why did the marriage last so long?

Why did the marriage last so long – You keep trying; if you’re climbing a mountain, not knowing the path it is expected there will be setbacks – and yes there were setbacks – but you brush yourself and keep trying.

But in the end – when a partner no longer wants to continue – and in climbing a mountain it is based on the buddy system – then what? I was committed to my wife and children.

Your lifeline is gone – and you are alone.

She retained legal counsel. I did not.

My lasting contribution to my sons will be their love of music. For my daughter – an inquisitiveness of mind

XXXIII. Why do you believe the marriage is invalid?

Why do I feel the marriage is invalid?

Did she really love me? Like the song from “Fiddler on the Roof” “Does He Love Me?”

There were times I wondered; in a kitchen conversation at our first apartment
“I am learning to love you; finding old love letters from an old boyfriend; comments about our needing separate beds and my seeing a priest for counseling; the total stop to intimate relations.

The subtleties one chooses to ignore to make a commitment work; being good; moving forward looking to God for help. But one comment does stand out when reluctantly she and our daughter went to a cookout with friends of mine from high school – and one of the spouses saying to my wife how much she admired my work; to which my wife sarcastically said

“It’s hard being married to a saint!”

One chose to ignore such snide comments – but why was she so cross with me?

I Gave You All I Had To Give
Why Did It Have To Stop?